

News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Issues Cyanobacteria Warning for Winnisquam Lake

Concord, NH - The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) has issued a cyanobacteria warning for those who recreate on Winnisquam Lake including the town beaches located in both Sanbornton and Belmont and Bartlett Beach in Laconia. The June 27, 2008 warning will remain in effect until additional samples reveal cyanobacteria levels have diminished. DES advises lake users to avoid contact with the water in areas experiencing cyanobacteria scums. DES also advises pet owners to keep their pets out of any waters that have a surface scum.

DES routinely monitors public beaches and lakes for cyanobacteria. Cyanobacteria are natural components of many water bodies in New Hampshire. Cyanobacteria may bloom and form surface scums when excess phosphorus and ample sunlight are available. Some cyanobacteria produce toxins that are stored within the cells and released when the cells die. Toxins can cause both acute and chronic health effects ranging in severity from skin and mucous membrane irritations, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea to liver and central nervous system damage.

DES monitors and inspects public beaches throughout the state to better protect public health. Beach and lake users should be on the lookout for cyanobacteria scums. Often they form dense surface scums are bright green or blue-green in color; or blooms may cause entire lakes to take on a blue-green hue. Sometimes they resemble paint chips or bright green balls floating in the water.

Visit the DES Beach Program website at www.des.nh.gov/Beaches/cyanobacteria.html for photos and more information about cyanobacteria.

If you notice anything resembling cyanobacteria, please refrain from wading, swimming, or drinking the water. Keep all pets out of the water and contact DES immediately. Please call DES to report a cyanobacteria bloom at (603)419-9229

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